

# **BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH**



***From an original painting of our church***

***by I. Cotterell***

# **March 2024**

## Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

Most of you know, I think, that I come from Norwich, which is famous for its medieval churches. The church I belonged to before I moved to Bury was considered a bit of a youthful upstart, only having been built in 1756.

So I was intrigued about moving to work and worship in a building which was younger than me. I didn't really have a picture of what the building was like, and I was intrigued the first time I visited. Like a lot of people, I'd seen pictures of the outside of the building, overshadowed by the Exchange building, and I know I've already confessed to a lot of you that before I first walked in, one summer Saturday in 2016, I wasn't honestly expecting much.

Well, how wrong I was! Our building is an absolute beauty, and I realised that the moment I set foot inside. The sense of light and airiness is wonderful, and it always feels like a deep sacred pleasure to walk into the worship area. We really do owe the congregation of fifty years ago a huge debt of gratitude for their courage and generosity in allowing the previous building to be brought down, and enabling the current one to rise in its place. It must have been heartbreaking to decide to vacate the old building, even though from what I'm told it was an entirely necessary decision, but without their bravery we'd have still been struggling in a building which was no longer suitable for our purposes, or, indeed, safe.

Of course, the church building isn't the church: that's us. The church is the people, the congregation, and all of those people who aren't necessarily members of the congregation, who might not come to services, but who are still part of the community. But if we didn't have a home, if we didn't have this building, we'd lose our sacred space.

None of us will forget that we have had a period in recent years when we couldn't access our building, and if anything made it clear to us just how precious this building is, it was that time, during the lockdowns, when we couldn't gather here. I came in periodically, initially to light candles on Sunday mornings to remember and name everyone who would normally

have been here with me, and the feeling of sadness and loneliness was almost tangible. I know that sounds fanciful, but I genuinely feel that our building missed us, and I know for a fact that we missed it.

And I will remember the joy of returning to worship in the building. We definitely 'came home' the day of that first post-lockdown service. We were sheltered and protected by this glorious building once again.

And, this month we are celebrating the building's fiftieth birthday. We'll join together for a tea party on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March, which is the exact anniversary of the Dedication Service for what was then a brand new church, and then on the Sunday morning we'll join together in worship, marking and celebrating our beloved home. We've been very fortunate to have found a copy of the Order of Service for that Dedication Service, and we'll be using some of the elements in the Anniversary Service. I wonder if some of you will recognise those aspects on the Sunday morning!

Big birthdays (birthdays with a zero at the end!) always feel very significant, and they can be a great time to ponder on what's changed, what's remained the same, what maybe still needs to change, and what we want to manifest over the next few years. I hope that during this anniversary year, and particularly over the anniversary weekend, we can all spend some time being grateful for what we have here in this glorious space, thinking about the changes, big and small, which have happened over the building's lifetime, and thinking with great gratitude about the life and work which has happened here over the last five decades.

As I write, daffodils are appearing at Holebottom, the church garden is getting slowly covered in crocuses, and (despite the fact that it's pouring with rain right now) there is a definite feeling of spring all over the place.

Happy birthday to our building, and blessings on all of us!

As ever, I send you my love.

Kate.

## **News of our community**

### **Connie Diggle**

Connie has moved to a nursing home in Egerton, and seems more relaxed and happy in the quieter environment. She sends her love to everyone, and says that she thinks of us all very frequently, and enjoys reading the Calendar every month.

### **Nancy Chadwick**

Nancy sends her love to everyone, and hopes to be able to join us for the Anniversary Service on 10<sup>th</sup> March. She recently turned 103 and is doing astonishingly well. She very much appreciates all the phone calls and offers of help she receives, and she knows that she's very much in our thoughts and our prayers.

### **Norah Hickton**

Norah is still in the North Manchester General Hospital, and we're awaiting news on when she might be able to move back into a nursing home. She's still cheerful and is in no pain or discomfort. I do give her everyone's love whenever I visit, and I know that Peter also appreciates the love and support he's being shown.

### **Molly Ratcliffe**

Molly has moved to a community hospital in Penrith to continue her recovery after breaking her hip. She's much more comfortable there, and it's easier for her family to visit. I know that we send her our love.

<p>We send our love to all those who are struggling with loss, or who are dealing with illness, whether that's their own or that of someone close to them.</p>
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## **Worship**

The services on **Sundays 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March** will be led by the minister.

### **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March**

The service on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March** will be led by Veronica Walker.

## **Communion**

This month's Inclusive Communion will take place on **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March**, at around 12.30 or 12.45. Everyone is welcome.

## **Ainsworth**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 10.30am.** Preacher: Tina Gandhi

## **Mid-month mid-week meditations**

I will be resuming the online meditation sessions, on a monthly basis, from April. They'll generally be on the second Tuesday of each month, at 6pm, but this will be flexible (they're not starting in March because I'll be away on the relevant day).

In the meantime, if you're interested in taking part in a long-running and much-loved regular online meditation session from the Findhorn Unitarian Network, please talk to either myself or Val Chamberlain.

## **Good Friday and Easter services at Bury**

### **Good Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 3pm:**

I will be hosting a short Good Friday Vigil and Communion in the Worship area on the afternoon of Good Friday. Everyone is very welcome to join us for this quiet and contemplative service, and to either stay for the communion or make your way into the lounge after the vigil. After the service there will be tea, coffee, and hot cross buns: you are very welcome to join us just for the buns if you'd like to! The service will last around forty-five minutes.

### **Easter Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March, 11.15am:**

Worship for Easter Morning.

Easter services are a lovely occasion: maybe you have friends or family members who don't often make it to church but who would like to join us for this one service. They'd be made very welcome indeed.



**clover street UNITARIANS**  
**WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**invitation to district**  
**congregations**

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**SATURDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2024**  
**11.00AM**

**Clover Street,**  
**Rochdale**  
**OL12 6TP**

Spring is a time for celebration!  
We invite you to join in worship with us, to come together in connection and affirmation of our shared values, and enjoy a catch up with friends after the service.

... and if you want to make a day out of it, why not visit the newly refurbished Rochdale Town Hall ☺

## **Minister's schedule, March 2024**

I will be on holiday from after the service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March until the morning of Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. I'll try to arrange for a colleague to be available for pastoral care should anyone need to talk to a minister while I'm off, but of course if it's an emergency I do want you to contact me. I'll be away (in Dorset) for some of that time so of course I'll be less contactable then.

### **Vestry Days: most Fridays, and one Saturday a month**

I plan to be in the vestry between 10am and 3pm on **Fridays 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> March**, and in the morning on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March**. I'm unsure whether I'll be in on **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**: this depends on what needs to be done after I get back from being on holiday. If you're coming into town specially to see me, it's probably worth checking first!

The heating and the kettle will be on on all those days, and I'd love to see you if you fancy popping in. You're also welcome to pop in if you don't particularly need to see me but either just want somewhere to warm up, or want to use the worship area for quiet prayer and reflection.

It's worth bearing in mind that people are often in and out on a Friday (which is the point of the vestry days), so if you want a more in-depth or confidential and uninterrupted chat, it would be better to arrange this on a different day.

## Regular Social Events

### Book Club

The March meeting of the Book Club will take place on **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March, at 2pm**, in the church lounge. We haven't yet received the book for the March meeting Tea and coffee will be available. Parking will only be available in case of a real need, so please check beforehand.

Everyone is welcome: you don't even need to have read the book!

### Camera Club

The Camera Club will meet on Zoom at 7pm on **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March** and **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March**. Everyone is welcome to join the group: please speak to one of the members for details (if you don't know who is in the Camera Club, Kate can tell you!)

*Kate, in her capacity as editor of the Calendar, would like to thank the Camera Club not only for the work they do every month on providing us with such glorious covers for the Calendar, but particularly for providing us with an extra double-page spread this month, to celebrate our birthday. Thanks also to Anne Mills, who comes up with the captions for the pictures.*

### Social Gatherings

The next gathering will take place on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March**: you are really welcome to join us, whether you'd like to get involved with collating the next edition of the Calendar, or just fancy joining us for a cup of tea, coffee, or hot chocolate and some friendly companionship.

## **Second First Sunday lunch**

There won't be a Second Sunday Lunch this month: Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March is the day of our Anniversary Service. I'll be away on the 17<sup>th</sup>, there's an Inclusive Communion on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and I'm doing a breakfast on the 31<sup>st</sup>, which means the only available Sunday in March is **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>**, making this month a First Sunday Lunch.

We normally head over to the Art Picture House at about 12.45, and you're welcome to join us for lunch, a coffee, or a drink. We generally all pay for ourselves, but if that would be difficult for you, please have a quiet word and we can sort it out.

### **March 2024 Calendar:**

The deadline for entries for the March edition of the Calendar will be teatime on **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March**, and we'll collate it on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Copies of services**

If you're on our email list, you get a copy of the service every week, and a list of the week's notices.

If you don't use email and would like to see a service that you've missed (or that you particularly enjoyed) please let Kate know and she'll make sure you get a paper copy either next time you're in church or by post.

## **Fiftieth birthday weekend**

Our glorious building was dedicated on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1974, and we will be celebrating over the weekend of **9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> March 2024**.

As well as the tea party on **9<sup>th</sup> March**, we will be holding an Anniversary Service on **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March**, in the presence of the Mayor of Bury and her consort. You are very warmly welcome to join us for this service, which will incorporate some of the material from the dedication service.

We hope to have a special history of the church available at that service for everyone to take home as a souvenir. This has been compiled for us by Betty Kenyon.

As that Sunday is also Mothering Sunday we will, of course, be distributing our traditional daffodil posies to everyone present.

Refreshments will be served after the service.

## Notes from the building.

In a recent service, we were re-introduced to the light of our chalice by our minister, and it was a service that resonated very deeply with me, because the building, our building, is much like the chalice Kate spoke of: it is designed for light – beautiful, resounding light. The light of the world dances off our walls and streams through our ceilings, it's the perfect Unitarian worship space, because that's exactly what it is supposed to be. It is our sacred home, that is why it is here, that is its purpose and it is wonderful how perfectly it suits that purpose.

If you are in the Sanctuary and see the light pouring in through the side windows, turn your head and enjoy that same light streaming down the opposite wall. The light from the lead glass windows behind the altar, during spring and early summer brings with it astonishing pools of colour rippling along the Sanctuary floor. If you are in the upstairs hall on an evening, look up and enjoy the view from the massive skylight windows and count the stars, or simply marvel at how much light is brought to us by those windows during summer, when we rarely have to turn on the electric lights at all.

It doesn't need to be so beautiful, it's a building, it needs to be practical at best; but it is both of those things, and more, much more... it's absolutely Unitarian and it's properly Sacred. We are blessed by it and by all those who did their absolute best to make that so very, very, real for us all.

*Ade Brady*

*Ade will be off work from the afternoon of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March until the afternoon of Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March. He'll be away for some of that time and unable to get back to Bury quickly even in an emergency.*

## Stewards for Sunday services, March 2024

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Faye Casey and Susan Mitchell
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Barbara Bamford and Jean Brookhouse
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Ewen Sim and Ade Brady
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Beryl Bowden and Marian Price

## Tea and coffee rota, March 2024

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Marian Price and Susan Holt
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Rita Boardall and Susan Mitchell
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Faye Casey and Janet Thatcher

If you think there's an error with the stewarding or tea and coffee rota, it's almost certainly because the Calendar editor has got confused: this happened last month and she's very sorry!

There is a vacancy on the stewarding rota if you'd like to be part of the team: have a word with either Betty or Kate. Stewarding is a really good way to get to chat to everyone as they come in to church, and fulfils a really important role, particularly when we have visitors.

If you don't want to be on the rota but are happy to help out occasionally, that would also be great!

## **Fifth Sunday Breakfast**

I'm going to try a new venture this year, and although it might not be the most imaginative name, I'm calling it "Fifth Sunday Breakfasts".

Whenever there are five Sundays in a month (this year that's January, March, June, September, and December, although I won't do it in December) I'm going to be providing pastries (shop-bought!) tea, coffee, and orange juice, in the lounge from 10am until 1045am.

It will be an extremely relaxed affair, and we'll just see how it goes – if it takes off that's great, and if it doesn't, then that's also entirely fine.

The tea and coffee people for those Sundays are happy for us to give this a go, and I've promised them that a) we'll be out of their way before they start preparing for after-service coffee and b) it won't involve any extra washing up for them!

You're very very welcome to join us for the first of these Fifth Sunday Breakfasts, on Easter Morning, **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 10am.**

## **NELUM news**

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 7.15pm:** NELUM meeting at Chowbent.

## **By-Gone Times by Betty Kenyon. No 44:**

### **From our Calendar of March 1894.**

April 1894 National Unitarian Conference in Manchester

Attention is specially called to the forth coming meetings in Manchester of the National Conference of our churches. Former Conferences have met in Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, and London.

We have been handsomely received elsewhere as guests. It now falls to our own people to play the part of hosts. Ministers and delegates from all over the country will be with us. The Conference will take place 10th April to 13th April 1894. Some 600 people are expected to attend so it falls upon the appointed committee to make arrangements for their reception. This will of course involve both trouble and expense. But "equal burdens break no backs". We trust our people will cordially assist the Conference Committee in the work they have undertaken.

In 2017 the General Assembly National Conference took place in Birmingham.

There were 300 attendees.

Below are some of those present from BUC in 2017.



At the start of the G.A. Meeting all the delegates gather and there is a Banner Parade.



Val Chamberlain was our banner carrier in 2017.

This year the Conference is 4-6 April 2024 at Staverton Park Hotel, near Daventry.

### **General Assembly Meetings, April 2024**

Bookings are now open for the General Assembly meetings, which take place at Staverton Park Hotel in Northamptonshire, from **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April**. The meetings are a great way to meet hundreds of Unitarians, attend workshops, take part in worship, and attend the denomination's business meetings. If you'd like to know more about the meetings, speak to Kate. We will be looking for two delegates to attend to represent the congregation, but you can also attend independently.

# Do you find this easier to read?

Almost everything we provide in print at church (including services, Calendars, letters, reports, and the minutes of most meetings) is available in a large-print format, and a recorded version of the Calendar is available on CD and on memory disk.

## Accessibility

We want our church and our community to be as accessible to everyone as it possibly can be. As well as providing everything in large print, we have a hearing loop, wheelchair access at the back of the building, and an accessible toilet.

Our services and other events are fidget-friendly!

We have also recently taken possession of a new lightweight, easily collapsible, sturdy wheelchair. The wheelchair lives in the cupboard under the front stairs, and you are free to use it at any time it would be useful in church.

If you have a short-term need at home and would like to borrow it, please speak to one of the church officers.

We know that there will be needs we haven't accounted for: if there is anything which would make it easier for you to engage with what we do, please please do tell us!

## Regular Events (all social events are subject to change)

### Sundays:

11.15am: Worship in person at Bury

### First Sunday of most months:

10.30am: Worship in person at Ainsworth

### Second Sunday of each month:

12.30 (approx.): Second Sunday Lunch. Please join Kate at a local pub for lunch, a coffee, or a drink. (If the cost would be a problem please have a quiet word with Kate).

### Fourth Sunday of each month:

12.30pm: Inclusive Communion Service at Bury

### Second and fourth Mondays of most months:

7pm: Camera club (normally online)

### Last Wednesday of each month:

2pm (Sept-May): Book club

### Most Fridays:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Day

### Second Saturday of each month:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Saturday

### Last Saturday of each month:

11am-1pm (approx.): Saturday Social Gathering

## What's on: March 2024

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March**

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

10.30am Ainsworth:

Morning service, led by Tina Gandhi

11.15am Bury:

Morning Service

12.45pm Bury:

First Sunday lunch

1pm Bury:

Trustees' meeting and AGM

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

10-2: Minister's Vestry Saturday

2pm: Afternoon birthday tea

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March**

11.15am Bury

Morning service, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of our church.

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

7pm: Camera Club, meeting on Zoom

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March**

11-2: Downstairs lounge booking

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March**

11.15am Bury:

Morning service, led by Veronica Walker

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	10-3: Minister's Vestry Day (provisional)
<b>Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	11am: Worship service at Rochdale Unitarian Church.
<b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March</b>	
11.15am Bury:	Morning service
12.30 approx:	Inclusive communion
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30 – 2.30: <i>British Red Cross booking (entire building)</i> 7pm: Camera club, meeting on Zoom 7.15pm: NELUM meeting, Chowbent Unitarian Chapel
<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Teatime: deadline for entries for the March Calendar
<b>Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March</b>	2pm: Book club meeting. Book to be announced.
<b>Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10-3: Minister's Vestry Day 3pm: Good Friday Vigil and communion, followed by hot cross buns.
<b>Sat 30<sup>th</sup> March</b>	11am onwards: Saturday Social Gathering and Calendar Collation party.

<b>Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	
10am Bury:	Fifth Sunday breakfast
11.15am Bury:	Worship for Easter morning

## Church Information:

Minister:

Rev. Kate Brady McKenna

0161 460 3363 / 07751 240886

[revkatemckenna@gmail.com](mailto:revkatemckenna@gmail.com)

Church address: 1 Bank Street, Bury, BL9 0DN

Church phone: 0161 761 3785

Website: [www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk](http://www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk)

Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church

## Church officers

Chair of trustees: Neville Kenyon 01204 887222

Chair of church council: Jean Maden

Church secretary: Karen Hampson 0161 766 2283

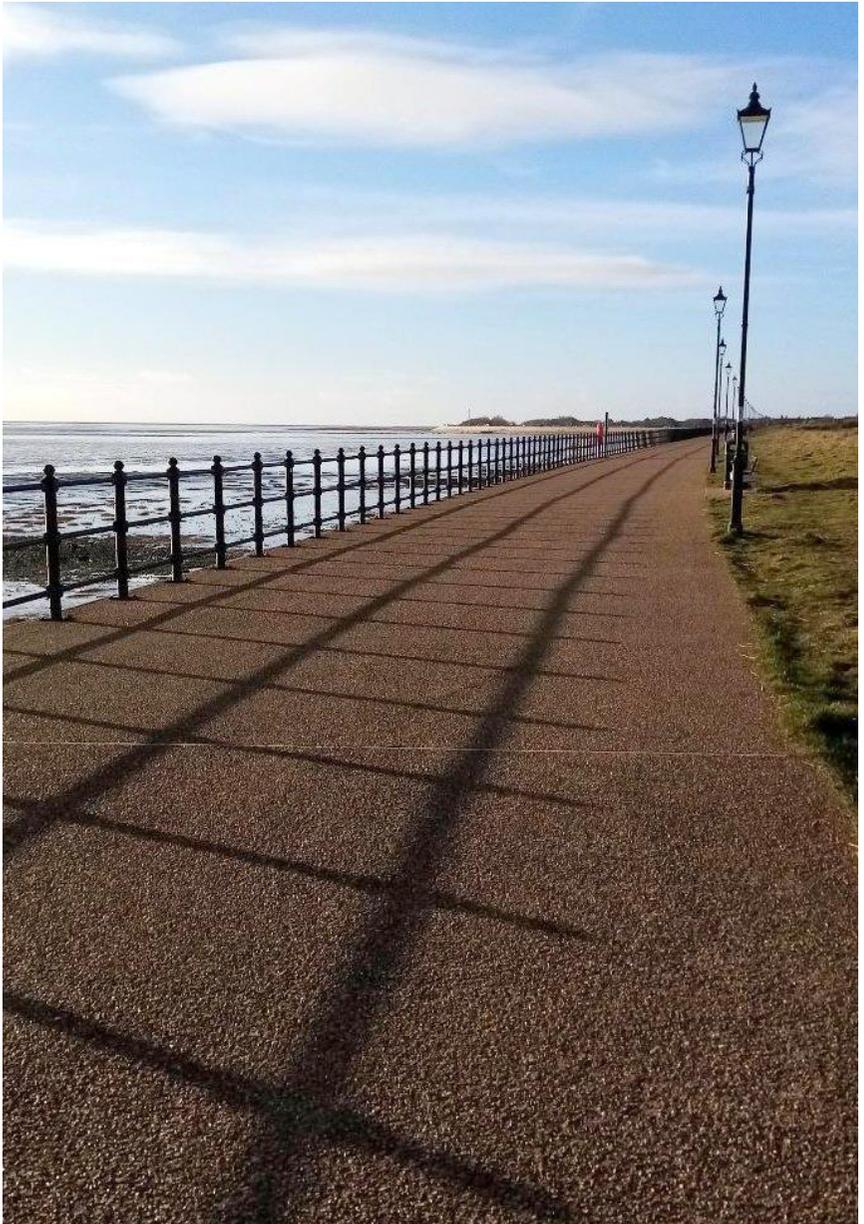
Chair of congregation: Betty Kenyon 01204 887222

Church treasurer: Lynda Arthur

## Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager Adrian Brady 07736 107143

Charity reg no: 107857



*Lytham promenade in the late-afternoon sun*



*Close-up of "The People Praising" by Elizabeth Mulchineck*



*and seen at a distance, from the worship-area*



*Early snowdrops, to welcome the spring*



*and autumn fruit & vegetables, ready for a Harvest Festival*



***A Lytham seaside-boat***



# BAPTISM CERTIFICATE

*This is to certify that*

**Diane Carole Mills**

*was baptised at*

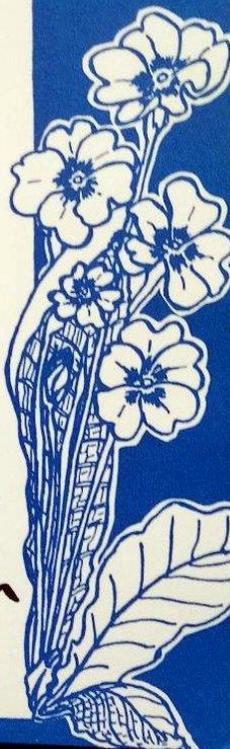
**Bury Unitarian  
on Church**

**24 February 1974**



**John D. Albon**

MINISTER



*The very first baby to be baptised in the new church*



***A quartet of Ministers, spanning 50 years!***



***A group of calendar – collators.***



***and a lonely goldfish, swimming in its bowl!***